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City of Salisbury Mayor's Spirit Luncheon to Honor Community Outreach to Youth through Athletics

*Salisbury City Council and Covenant Community Connection to Uplift Outstanding
Works of Coach Andrew Mitchell in Support of Local Adolescents*

Salisbury, NC_March 25, 2009 – Salisbury Mayor Susan Kluttz, in conjunction with City Council Members and the Covenant Community Connection, will graciously welcome attendees to the 2009 Mayor's Spirit Luncheon, to be held at noon on Tuesday, March 31. The program, entitled "Championship Achievement: Reaching Children through Athletics," will take place at Salisbury City Hall, 217 South Main Street. The bi-annual event highlights successes within the community that have improved race relations. A diverse audience, consisting of local businessmen and women, faith leaders and citizens, will receive a motivational program highlighting Coach Andrew Mitchell's outreach to local youth through athletics.

Mayor Kluttz notes, "On behalf of the Salisbury City Council, I would like to sincerely thank Coach Andrew Mitchell for his devotion to the youth of this community. Coach Mitchell supports the Bobby Jackson Summer Basketball program with his time and energy and helps provide a positive summer experience for children. Through constructive curriculum, the program provides knowledge of basketball skills, coaching on career and education decisions, social etiquette training, and character trait development. Attendees enjoy motivational social interaction and attend a capstone graduation ceremony to celebrate their achievements. Team athletics play a key role in positive youth development and create opportunities for children to become involved in encouraging and collaborative environments. As a coach, Andrew Mitchell offers a constructive role model and a mentor to his players. By offering a profound influence, both on and off the court, Coach Mitchell motivates young players to achieve. His devotion to the Lady Hornets led our Salisbury High School Girls Basketball team to a 2A State Championship with an outstanding season record of 29 wins out of 32 games. We are truly honored to recognize his continuous commitment to local youth."

Luncheon attendees will enjoy port-a-pit barbecue chicken dinners, purchased in support of the annual Habit for Humanity fundraising project. As is tradition, Mayor Kluttz will introduce three local diverse clergy and faith leaders, whom each in-turn, will offer the invocation through blessings, prayers and words of praise. The Mayor notes, "It is truly through the sharing of these various invocations, that we are able to comprehend, embody, and uplift the multitude of religions, ethnicities, and beliefs present within our Salisbury Community." In addition, the Mayor shares that "Today's purpose is three-fold as we bring together people of different races, religions, and cultures. We encourage and promote better race relations in the community and bring to light recent efforts to make Salisbury-Rowan better for all people. By celebrating and appreciating diversity throughout our community, we are able to create stronger awareness for the dedicated efforts taking place in support of this cause."

Kluttz emphasizes that the athletic programs uplifted during the Spirit Luncheon portray an overwhelming community response to past citizen feedback. "The Salisbury-Rowan United Summit was attended by over five hundred citizens who offered an appeal for positive youth intervention programs to deter youth violence and create a safer Salisbury-Rowan for all." Continuing, the Mayor offers that, "Recreational opportunities such as high school athletics and summer camp opportunities ranked high among citizens as venues for positive results. Our community continues to respond eagerly and without hesitation by supplying positive opportunities and affirmative character models for our youth. Today, we celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of a sincerely devoted coach who serves as a mentor to area youth. Individuals that reach out and provide a positive youth experience, truly offer a promising future for our children." The continuing message of "outreach to youth" builds upon the theme of the October 2008 Mayor's Spirit Luncheon. Pastor Jennifer Ginn of St. John's Lutheran Church and Pastor Bill Godair of Cornerstone Church were both recognized for constructive youth programs in the areas of art and music, respectively.

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